

Lessons Learned from Implementation of the Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse in Secondary Schools



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This booklet is based entirely on the experiences of the grantees awarded GRAAs in 2002 and 2004. They have shared their successes and struggles in the implementation of their chosen model programs and we sincerely appreciate their efforts. Contributors to this booklet include the following 2002 and 2004 Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse (GRAA) recipients who worked closely with the grants: Betty Barnes, Debra Baron, James Beam, Mary Bork, Jamie Branton, Pat Conner, Eric Einspruch, Jewel Fink, Marian Gage, Farrell Gourneau, Kristin Grazer, Trudy Higgins-Edison, Montean Jackson, Gene Jacquez, Judy Johnson, Anagene Loebick, Tonda Luckett, Marianne McCollough, Kathleen McNew, Jeff Mullins, Ed Oliver, Phillip Olynciw, Catherine Rain, Paul Reed, Donna Rose, Tamela Russell-Pumphrey, Jennifer Sammons, Susan Sampson, Linda Stevens, Patricia Mackey Stone and George Woodring. We hope you enjoy and are inspired by their stories as much as we have been.

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Introduction

Three years ago, in 2002, forty-six school districts and their educational agency partners were awarded funding from the US Department of Education to implement evidence-based prevention programs to reduce underage drinking in their communities and schools. In 2004, an additional ten awards were made to districts who are now completing their first year of grant implementation. This document, *Lessons Learned from Implementation of the Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse*, is intended to serve as a sourcebook for future grantees and others who are stepping forward to address the issue of underage drinking in their schools and communities.

The Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse program hosted two national training and technical assistance conferences each year and at least one regional conference in each region, where grantees had opportunities to meet, attend workshops, and network and discuss many of the issues they faced in implementing their programs. It quickly became clear that grantees faced many of the same issues regardless of their geographic location, and that they greatly appreciated the opportunity to share their challenges and learn how others were successfully addressing some of the same issues.

As the first iteration of the Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse drew to a close, officials at the US Department of Education recognized that the 2002 cohort of grantees had much information to offer successive cohorts of grantees. In an effort to capture and record lessons learned, a call for submissions was sent out that resulted in voluntary stories of field experiences by the grantees.

This document includes stories, comments, and experiences outlined by the grantees themselves. Submissions were received in the following eight categories:

- Sharing Successful Strategies for Program Implementation
- Managing Change Effectively
- Changing School Culture
- Sharing Data Convincingly
- What Does Success Look Like After Three Years & Beyond?
- Building Community, Regional and Statewide Connections
- Making Underage Drinking a Community Agenda
- Prevention Link to Academic Success

Specifically, this document contains stories and quotations from grantees about the challenges they faced and how they overcame those challenges and adapted programs to achieve their goals. Contact information for each grantee quoted is also provided.

This document is an attempt to share the vast knowledge gained from experience and to avoid “reinventing the wheel.” The professional educators who contributed “lessons learned” have blazed a trail for those who follow them in the effort to integrate alcohol abuse prevention education into the schools and communities of this country. Thank you all for your efforts and for sharing your valuable stories!

Sharing Successful Strategies for Program Implementation

“Washington State developed and implemented an adaptation of Project SUCCESS. During the course of the grant, a need was discovered for a detailed checklist of program fidelity and evaluation requirements. The purpose of the checklist is to align and help meet the needs of staff training, staff supervision, and program evaluation. The checklist defines 10 topics and how to show that the topic has been successfully addressed: trained professional direct service provider, form and operate in partnerships, quality supervision, prevention education series, individual screening for services, individual student counseling and referral to services, run support groups, increased project success visibility to school staff, provision of universal (school wide) prevention activities, and intensive data collection for adaptation of this best practice.”

*Eric Einspruch,
Senior Research Associate,
RMC Research Corp.
Portland, Oregon*

“Choose programs and curriculums wisely.

- A key part of implementation is the buy-in of the teachers or staff that are going to teach the curriculum(s) or run the program(s).
- Assess whether materials can be recycled versus re-ordering.
- Administration, at all levels, need to be educated about the grant to support implementation.

Data collection is a key component.

- From the beginning of the grant the evaluation plan should be mapped out.
- Evaluation and evaluators need to be a key part of every yearly budget.

Build good relationships in the community. Community support enhances a program and helps build sustainability. Take time to build relationships with key people in the community.

- Medical community and facilities.
- Religious community.
- Media.

Collaborate with agencies and organizations that align to your goals and/or objectives.

- State agencies that regulate/license alcohol.
- Law enforcement agencies.
- Substance abuse agencies.
- Mental health agencies.

Learn your community (environmental) culture.

- Assess the parental influence on underage drinking.
- Learn how the legal system, in your cities and/or county, handles alcohol violations.”

*James Beam,
Health & Safe Schools
Specialist*

*Trudy Higgins-Edison,
Safe Schools Facilitator
Sugar Land, Texas*

“In regard to learning about implementing model programs, we found that in implementing model programs, the most effective way to ensure fidelity is to use a ‘specialist’ to deliver the curriculum. In using teachers to implement a program, we had maybe half the level of implementation as we had hoped for. This may be due to teachers finding the

curriculums to be 'lacking' and 'immature' so were reluctant to give up lessons they had developed over years that they knew were successful with students when the model program lessons were not as successful. The frustration expressed by these teachers is that they do not have the opportunity to conduct 'scientific research' to 'prove' what they have developed is effective.

We also experienced the elimination of health classes, where drug and alcohol issues as well as skills and other health related topics are taught.

Unfortunately, trying to sustain the cost of a specialist as well as the ongoing costs of the curriculum after the grant period has ended is very difficult and will most likely result in the curriculums not being 'institutionalized'."

*Marian Gage
Oroville, California*

"Upon inheriting my GRAA [Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse] project in year two of the award, these are the steps I took to ensure successful project implementation and completion:

- 1) Adaptation to a component of the original application was needed based on an assessment of its implementation to-date. One component was experiencing significant difficulties and not meeting the project's goals and objectives;
- 2) Clearly redefined goals and communicated them with all targeted sites regarding expanded project implementation and expectations of project staff involved;
- 3) Ensured all key stakeholders were on target for change, bridged any gaps between academics and school-based student support services;
- 4) Ensured project staff were skilled in area of need, trained and ready to take on roles;

- 5) Accessed technical assistance (CSAP's Western CAPT) for additional staff training and support;
- 6) Contacted Project Officer with project adaptation questions and request process. Before moving forward I needed to submit a proposal that discussed why adaptation was needed to original, benefits to overall project success and site needs, restate project goals and objectives, develop a new timeline to project and establish a new budget, receive notification and approval for adaptation from Project Officer;
- 7) Implemented new expanded project;
- 8) Began dialog with district management regarding funding and administrative buy-in for continuation after project completion. Assessment of project's effectiveness, fidelity and strategic planning for continuation beyond the grant needs to start early on.

*Montean R. Jackson,
Coordinator
Safe & Drug Free Schools
Fairbanks, Alaska*

"Our project was unique because two neighboring school districts combined efforts, shared resources, developed and offered similar programming. In total, both districts serve over 15,000 K-12 students. However, the Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse focused on students in grades 7-12. Our comprehensive efforts included the following components:

- Implementing Project Northland curriculum in grades 7-9,
- Youth Development (Jr. High after school Program & High School Leadership)
- Parent Empowerment, and
- Community Involvement.

This paper highlights 2 programs that were implemented as a result of this grant.

Jr. High After School Program:

We were concerned that a large percentage of Jr. High students in our communities were going home to unsupervised homes. In order to build healthy school connections in a safe and supervised environment we developed an After School Program and offered it to students in grades 7 & 8. The program included three components: study and organizational skills, social/recreational activities and service learning projects. The program objectives were that students who participated in the after school program would report an increase in:

- Positive relationships with adults (teachers, coaches, parents, etc.),
- Feeling more connected to school,
- Opportunities for positive social involvement, and
- Healthy beliefs and clear standards for positive behavior.

We were able to show that the majority of students participating in the program reported an increase in all the stated objectives.

Parent Empowerment:

In the last three years we were able to provide parents with many opportunities to receive information about parenting and preventing youth alcohol use. Several speakers were brought in and a lot of print material was distributed to parents. A new and effective parent empowerment activity that was piloted this past year was the Parent Fair. The Fair was a perfect example of how two communities and multiple agencies collaborated and offered a professional, worthwhile program for parents.

The Parent Fair occurred on a Saturday morning in March. Parents who attended received a full morning of information and parenting strategies

on a wide-variety of topics. The breakout sessions included information on such topics as parenting challenging children, internet safety, teenage blues vs. depression, and parenting teens. Parents with children of all ages attended the Fair. Elementary students had the largest representation of parents (135) and secondary students had the second largest representation of parents (100). More partners were brought in and plans have already begun for next year's Parent Fair!

While the curriculum is an important piece in preventing youth alcohol use, we designed a multi-faceted program with many strategies."

*Judy Johnson
Lakeville, Minnesota*

"Highland Local School's greatest lesson learned implementing the Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse is you never have too much prior planning or communication with all key players! We involved school administration in initial planning, but quickly learned other school staff should have been informed. Specifically, we needed to introduce our instructor to other teachers and inform school staff about the program's purpose, goals, and criteria for student selection, linkage between program and classroom, referral procedures, and role of the instructor in the school. Our Reconnecting Youth instructor is hired by a community organization requiring us to mesh an agency system with a school system. There were issues surrounding who dictated work hours, supervision, and evaluation as well as working with different billing and payment systems. Work these details out before starting the program. The MOST CRITICAL area is getting the right person for the job. Crucial factors for this position are being passionate and knowledgeable about prevention, relating well to kids, and being non-judgmental. Lastly, training is very important. Not just curricular but also regarding school climate and working within a school system. Addressing these areas prior to

your program start will avoid many of the bumps we figured out along the way.”

*Anagene Loebick,
Grants Coordinator
Sparta, Ohio*

“In our implementation of the STARS program we found that it is important to talk to the developer of the program and/or someone that has implemented the program if possible before writing a grant. We had a short conversation with the developer, but she did not go into incentives used in the trials and the requirement for a data base. This would have changed our approach and budget. The number of employees would have increased to build and maintain the data base. The developer was working in one school at a time with a much smaller population and had not worked in multiple locations.”

*Tonda Luckett,
Director
STARS for Families
Bardstown, Kentucky*

“The Prevention program begun in January 2005 for the last half of the 2004-2005 school year allowed implementation of strategies for elevating the dangers of alcohol abuse among students. Many techniques were utilized which included lessons which necessitated student participation and involvement from the PAL curriculum.

Additional lessons were developed based on the PAL curriculum to supplement those in the PAL text which likewise required student participation. The supplemental lessons studied the lives of persons who have been successful against all odds. These biographical vignettes were used to allow students to see the potential they have to change and for success if they so desire.

Community members were invited into the classroom to speak to the students about the dangers

of alcohol use and abuse. These guests included a law enforcement officer who addressed alcohol abuse among young people in the city of Gallup and a physician who spoke to the class on the dangers of alcohol and its relationship to diabetes.

Additional speakers included a Navajo Code Talker, a paraplegic whose condition was caused by his own DWI, a former mayor of Gallup, an artist, a Navajo Education Circle of Light representative who also spoke to the class about the WWII Navajo Code Talkers and the president and first lady of the Navajo Nation. All of these speakers addressed the problems with alcohol use among young people and encouraged the students to stay away from alcohol and to set goals for their lives.

Also included in this program were Project Venture activities which engaged the students in experiential learning that emphasized teamwork, communication and problem solving. In fact, the entire program: PAL, supplemental lessons and Project Venture emphasized communication, teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking and goal setting.

Overall, the program, I believe, has been a success and the hope is to build on this for next year and make the program even more relevant and interactive.

The main “lesson learned” from the first year of the program was that the students must be able to trust the teacher and know that the teacher truly believes in each student’s potential and worth.”

*Ed Oliver,
Project Director
Gallup, New Mexico*

“The Peer Team Training program conducted for the Patchogue-MedFord GRAAP grant has resulted in: 180 students being trained in three-day residential workshops which included team-building, action-planning, decision-making, problem-solving, the

hurt of bias, and communication skills; the development and airing of six public service announcements relaying messages of drinking and driving, bias, alcohol-free parties, and stay in school, in both English and Spanish; and the completion of twelve action plans which were focused upon conducting a ninth grade transition program, peer information programs, after school recreation, and free social events for all students.”

*Phillip Olynciw,
Products & Services Manager
Nia Solutions Corporation
Patchogue, New York*

“Success is seen by the calendar of National/State Awareness months: Red Ribbon Week in October; Great American Smokeout in November; Kick Butts Day and Prom Promise in April. The major focus in these campaigns heightens the awareness of smoking, drinking, and other forms of drug use.

Success is evident in tobacco and alcohol classes when students attend for themselves as well as non-users attending who are concerned for family members. Success is seen by a change in lifestyles, alternatives to drug use, coping skills and educational activities that they need.

Success is positive for Project SUCCESS when the administration openly regrets that the program will end and they “don’t know what to do” without us and the program. The drug prevention program is needed in the high school as an ongoing program.

Sharing Successful Strategies

Essential to implementation of the program is developing relations with school personnel. To develop good relationships, the counselor attends staff meetings and speaks about alcohol and other drug abuse problems. They are informed about making referrals, confidentiality, and outside agencies and groups.

Newcomers groups are established early in the year to acquaint new students with our program and our desire to help them if needed. Another important aspect of implementation is developing a diverse curriculum from Project SUCCESS materials. This curriculum is used in prevention education classes as well as group sessions. Special community and state organizations are also invited to speak to the student body about drug use and prevention.”

*Donna Rose and Linda
Stephen,
Project SUCCESS
Counselors
Tazewell, Tennessee*

“Successfully implementing programs requiring Parent Involvement has been a long term goal for many schools and other organizations and one of the most difficult to accomplish. This year, we found success in implementing our ‘Parents Who Care’ program by targeting youth service programs that had a strong parent component in place. Most existing youth service provider programs are very welcoming and are in constant search for educational programming for their parents. Partnering with existing programs to reach parents allows us to provide a service to parents at a time that is convenient for them and results in increased attendance. When working within the school system to implement ‘Parents Who Care’, we discovered that the Youth Services Center Coordinator’s connection to the parents made the difference in parents’ participation. The better the relationship with the parents, the more parents agreed to attend parenting workshops. The parents viewed the Coordinator as a friend who was looking out for their child’s best interest and therefore looked upon the workshop as one additional way of helping their child in school. This relationship also appeared to have a positive influence on how many parents completed all three sessions of the program.

We know that parental involvement is one of the keys for our children's success; we must make sure that we are giving this message to our parents. At the beginning of the school year when we have their attention, this is the time to inform and recruit. It is critical to help parents understand that it is important that they be involved and provide them the opportunity to select from various times and activities so they can participate. Solicit volunteers to keep in contact with a set number of parents throughout the school year to remind them of parental involvement opportunities."

*Tamela Russell-Pumphrey
Seven Counties Mental
Health Agency (Partner)
Louisville, Kentucky*

"Program Implementation and success is dependent upon administration and teacher buy-in. Our project's success can be attributed to the dedication and commitment from our administrators and teachers. They have to believe in what you are doing and the programs you are using in the classroom. It is essential that everyone is involved in the learning process and takes ownership of the programs, projects, and outcomes."

*Jennifer Sammons,
Project Director
Sioux Rapids, Iowa*

"In July 2003, our Office of Safe & Drug Free Schools suggested that four middle schools and four high schools implement 'Skills for Managing Anger' as a pilot program. We provided training, and our mental health partner supplied the materials. Because of the excitement and successes this program created, implementation has now expanded to 19 middle schools and 14 high schools with 33 Family Resource/Youth Service Center Coordinators trained as facilitators. In August 2005, 'Skills for Managing Anger' will be introduced as part of the school culture to a traditional high school (126

teachers and staff) and an alternative high school (10 teachers). As of May 2005, 300 students have received 'Skills for Managing Anger'.

Results from preliminary analysis of 141 participants in the 'Skills for Managing Anger' program were very positive. Statistically significant differences were found between pre-test and post-test paired analyses. A significant reduction in aggressive behaviors was reported, including hitting-back, fighting because of anger, frequently feeling angry, being mean toward others, and taking anger out on others. This was accompanied by a significant increase in positive behaviors, such as using a personal action plan, identifying hot buttons, using positive self-talk, using time to cool off, and using personal power to manage their anger."

*Susan Sampson,
School Liaison
Louisville, Kentucky*

Managing Change Effectively

“The Glendale Unified School District has successfully implemented the research-based program Project SUCCESS for the past three years with our four comprehensive high schools. We were able to effect positive changes because we worked to faithfully replicate the program. Another effective strategy was selecting a well-qualified and experienced external evaluator who was able to provide tools that could measure success and provide an additional set of eyes to ensure faithful replication and assist in management decision-making at critical points in the project life. The third factor was integrating the new program into the broader comprehensive safe and drug free schools curriculum and intervention program within the school district.”

*Betty Barnes,
Student Support Services
Glendale, California*

“Portland (Oregon) Public Schools implemented a social norms marketing campaign in one urban high school (LHS) to complement existing research-based curricula. First, a class called “Peer Education,” offered for credit during the regular school day, was created to extensively educate a group of students about the dangers associated with youth alcohol use and train them to be advocates for youth alcohol prevention. As a result, these students gained the skills necessary to initiate a student-led social norms marketing campaign. To do this, they first gained recognition and credibility in the school with a two-week campaign called, ‘Are You Ready?’

Posters with prominent students and staff members encouraged students to make pledges to help prevent and reduce alcohol abuse at LHS, for which they were given silicone bracelets with the words ‘I AM READY.’ The Peer Educators then worked with

grant evaluators to create and administer a school-wide survey. This survey confirmed that students at the school dramatically overestimated the substance use of their peers. Following social norms marketing case studies, the Peer Educators then identified the largest discrepancies in perceived and actual use, and advertised the actual non-use on colorful posters. (Example: ‘Most LHS students are alcohol-free!’)”

*Kristin Grazer,
Prevention Specialist
Portland, Oregon*

“As is commonly known, schools are notorious for their lack of ability to be flexible and receive or initiate change. They are widely known for traditions, norms and mores, decades in the making, which are ‘the way we do things’. However, change can be accomplished, and the very culture of the school can liberate itself from the chains of the past, and move forward to new and exciting progress.

The way to initiate change is to create, manage, and foster good relationships with school administration, faculty and staff. These are the people who usually hold on to the long-standing traditions. If these people can trust the initiator of change, the defenses against change will be decreased and much easier to accomplish. To foster these relationships and build said trust, one must be cordial and helpful, and willing to make concessions that both sides can agree on. When change is needed, being stubborn is just another roadblock. Also, one needs to be ready to act when opportunities are presented. As previously mentioned, schools do not open themselves to change often; so taking advantage of every opportunity is a must. Lastly, open lines of communication with the administration, faculty, and staff are also a must. This will allow all concerns,

interests, and areas of discussion to be opened and dealt with. This will allow any changes to be much better received. Once the change is received, it can be free to happen, and will be embraced.

First and foremost, before any change, such as the introduction of Project SUCCESS or others like it, one must have these relationships established with School Boards, principals, and teachers. With these relationships, the whole dynamic of a school can change. School culture is defined and perpetuated by these people, and to change their minds is to change the culture.”

*Paul Reed, Jr.,
Project SUCCESS Counselor
Tazewell, Tennessee*

Changing School Culture

“Some students at Union County High School are members of the SADD Chapter. I feel that these students are promoting positive cultural choices. Each month they participate in various awareness programs for the school and community. They begin the year with a membership drive, chain of life campaign, and homecoming week activities (this year the SADD float won 3rd place). For one of their biggest weeks, Red Ribbon Week, this year they did a bulletin board called, ‘Born to Be Drug-Free’ where they did a collage of baby pictures, a red balloon release, pledge cards, and also alcohol facts read with each morning’s announcements. They participated in the Great American Smokeout Day with information packets. In December, they decorated a tree called the Tree of Life with 447 red ribbons and clear lights to represent the victims killed in 2003 alcohol related accidents. Members promoted Click It or Ticket—they passed out Dum Dums (if seat belt was not on) and Smarties (if seat belt was on). They also promoted National Kick Butts Day and Prom Promise cards.”

*Jamie Branton,
Project SUCCESS Counselor
Tazewell, Tennessee*

“Would high school students think it was cool to join an alcohol prevention club or would it bring back memories of elementary school and their ‘Just Say No’ club? Could high school students change the attitudes of their peers about using alcohol? These were some of the questions we asked ourselves when we applied for and received the GRAA. Over the past three years the answers to these questions and many more have been a resounding ‘YES!’

NOAHS (No Alcohol in High School) Promise clubs have made significant changes to the school culture of all seven high schools in Sumner County,

TN. Student ambassadors have made a positive impact in their schools through a myriad of activities, both educational and alternative, that include assemblies, service learning activities, Prom Promise activities, Red Ribbon Week activities, After-Prom activities, dances, game nights for the school, Class Action curriculum, and a million and one ways to party without using alcohol. And, student ambassadors have made it the “in” thing to wear a black t-shirt with the NOAHS Promise logo and the words, ‘Drinking is for Dorks.’

Who would have thought that as socially acceptable as alcohol use is among our high school students that the NOAHS Promise program and its student ambassadors would be responsible for a 5.6% decrease in alcohol use? We did. We believed in our young people and in their desire to change their school culture. We knew they could do it and they did. But the journey has really just begun.”

*Pat Connor,
SDFS Coordinator
Gallatin, Tennessee*

“Turtle Mountain Community High School implemented the research-based program Reconnecting Youth (RY). The RY program has had and is having a positive effect on student participants and the overall student body.

One of the objectives of the RY program is to improve the moods of the students within the program. We have accomplished this task with a variety of strategies. The one strategy we as staff believe has worked best is to always show the students that we care about them by acknowledging them and inquiring about their status within their classes and personal life away from school.

Native American students (Turtle Mountain Community High School has a 95% Native American student body) need to know that someone cares about them and most importantly that someone is there to help them. It is imperative that school staff demonstrate respect to the students both on and off campus. The RY staff has worked to project a positive image throughout the school and continues to encourage and guide other staff members on the importance of showing empathy and sensitivity to our students. The philosophy of RY is to always show care and concern for each other and we have worked intensely to instill this concept within our student body.”

*Farrell F. Gourneau,
Grant to Reduce Alcohol
Abuse
Belcourt, North Dakota*

Sharing Data Convincingly

“One of the most important tools the Iroquois-Kankakee Regional Office of Education (I-KAN ROE) uses in its underage drinking prevention efforts is the nationally recognized PRIDE Survey. The Pride Survey has been used since 1998 by the federal government as a measurement of adolescent drug use and is administered annually to more than six million students nationwide. The I-KAN ROE has been using it to collect data on its prevention programs since 1989. The survey has allowed the I-KAN ROE to track program effectiveness while staying current with federal requirements, thus enabling staff to show results using GRAAP measures. In addition, it provides comparative data with the local sample’s national counterparts, is easily administered by classroom teachers and relatively inexpensive to process. Last year, some 4,000 students in grades 6, 8 and 10 in Kankakee and Iroquois counties were surveyed. Responses from four groups were compared against a summary of national Pride Survey respondents. It also compared local students who participated in I-KAN prevention programs against those who did not. The results were compelling: The I-KAN ROE’s prevention programs are reducing alcohol use among area youth. For details, contact Debra Baron at (815) 936-4606.”

*Debra Baron,
Director
Pledge for Life Partnership
Kankakee, Illinois*

“In Project SUCCESS, sharing data is a cornerstone of the program. The ability to share data in a convincing and informative way is how minds are changed, and lives released from addictions. There is an art to sharing data, and it must be done to help children who are at-risk.

The best way to share data, or the manner that I have found most helpful, is to be confident in your data, have counter-arguments ready, and not be confrontational. By being confident, people understand that what one is saying is real and relevant, and not just propaganda to sway minds. This makes it much easier for others to accept what is presented as true. Also, most people are resistant to change, and will argue and bring up any perceived weakness in the data. Be prepared for such an eventuality, and have supportive data ready and accessible to make firm, yet non-confrontational, statements and contradictions to these arguments. This is very important, to not be confrontational. This totally invalidates any progress one has made if a confrontation occurs. Avoid this at all costs, and data will be much better received.”

*Paul Reed, Jr.,
Project SUCCESS Counselor
Tazewell, Tennessee*

“In spring 2004, the Synergy Coalition in Vallejo, CA, the community oversight committee for the Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse published a chart book, Charting Our Future: the Health of Vallejo’s Children and Adolescents, a unique comprehensive presentation of data on the health status of Vallejo’s ethnically diverse population of young people. This document was supported through a grant from the California Endowment Local Opportunities fund to develop an overall Health Plan for Vallejo’s youth. Synergy is an active collaborative partnership with community and regional leaders from public and private health providers, youth and family serving agencies, state and local government agencies, local faith communities, and schools. Together we developed a user-friendly ‘databank’, the chart book, which is a collection of health information

from a wide variety of sources, with much of the information inaccessible to our health policy planners and providers. To ‘fill the information gaps’ we employed focus groups of youth and adults, surveys, and interviews. Never before has such a complete databank been provided to our community leaders and stakeholders to assist them in their planning for youth programs and services. The chart book, Charting Our Future: the Health of Vallejo’s Children and Adolescents can be downloaded from the Fighting Back Partnership website: <http://www.fight-back.org>”

*Jewel Fink,
Prevention Program
Vallejo, California*

What Does Success Look Like After Three Years of Work and Beyond?

“RY is institutionalized as a credit-course within the school district. The State of North Dakota has recognized that RY credit can count toward graduation. 110 students have completed the RY program. The RY-involved students have improved academically as a group from 1.0 to 1.77 in their GPA. The RY-involved students have improved in attendance as a group by 28%. The RY-involved students decreased their referrals to the office from 4.36 to 1.2. When there are decreases in the office referrals, the possible incidents that may lead to out of school suspension or expulsions are also lessened.

90% of our RY students believe that alcohol is harmful and 63% disapprove of alcohol use. Actual self-reported use “in the past 30 days” indicated 71% used AOD while 21% reported no use. While these percentages are not satisfactory, any decrease in drinking or drug use is welcomed with a population who, without interventions, will have used at an expected rate of 100%.

Success to me is when an RY student graduates from High School and after he/she receives their diploma they seek you out and give you a hug and say, ‘I could not have made it without you.’ ‘You made a difference for me.’ ‘Thank you.’”

*Farrell F. Gourneau,
Grant to Reduce Alcohol
Abuse
Belcourt, North Dakota*

“The Reducing Alcohol Abuse Grant funded Life Skills in the Denver Public Schools. Denver Public Schools is an urban school district serving 72,000 students in Denver, Colorado. Students speak over 60 different languages in Denver Public Schools. The Reducing Alcohol Abuse Grant served 20 middle schools with Life Skills. The Life Skills Program

has been translated into Spanish and has been found effective to increase knowledge, attitude and assertive skills to decrease the use of substances in the target school sites. Over 300 teachers have been trained in the Life Skills Program.

Successes: 764 Middle Schools students showed significant increases in Drug-related, Life Skills Knowledge and Drug Refusal Skills from the LST pre-post tests assessments. In addition, there were significant increases in the saying ‘NO’ subscore, as well as using a variety of Refusal Skills in the subscore. These are impressive results since the increases come from 9 different middle schools.”

*Gene Jacquez,
Denver Public Schools
Denver, Colorado*

“One of the successful programs of the School District of Palm Beach County Alcohol Abuse grant was the FACE IT program. FACE IT stands for Families Acting Collaboratively to Educate and Involve Teens and is an interactive, educational, life skills program designed to empower families to help their teens stop and avoid using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. After a search revealed no model programs that matched our criteria, we began the two-year process of designing, developing, editing, revising, piloting, revising, implementing, revising, and improving. After three years of work, our successes have been gratifying:

- Since its inception, FACE IT has served over 1850 adolescents and their parents/caregivers, approximately 850 families
- In School Year 2005, as an Alternative to Suspension program, FACE IT saved 1902 days out of school for secondary students

- In School Year 2005, there was a 1.6% recidivism rate for school alcohol, tobacco, and other drug discipline referrals, a decrease from the 2% recidivism rate for School Year 2004
- As compared to the normal recidivism rate of 14%, FACEIT teens referred from Youth Court had a 7% recidivism rate

Several aspects worked in combination to make the program a success:

- Dynamic, interactive curriculum
- Consistent parent involvement
- Enthusiastic, skilled staff
- On-going networking and staff development
- High expectation for participants' behavior and personal growth."

*George Woodring,
Specialist
West Palm Beach, Florida*

Building Community, Regional and Statewide Connections

“Organized in the Fall of 2001, Synergy, in partnership with the Division of Adolescent Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, University of California San Francisco and the University of California Davis Cooperative Extension (4-H), is a grassroots community coalition of local leaders, health providers, youth and family serving agencies, local government, the faith community, and schools concerned about and committed to addressing the critical health issues for Vallejo’s youth.

Mindful of the health disparities among various ethnic groups in our diverse population and working together toward common goals, we have identified Ten Objectives to Promote Adolescent Health for Vallejo Youth. They are (not organized by order of priority):

- Supportive relationships
- Physical safety
- Youth with special needs (physical, emotional, developmental, learning differences; chronic health issues; gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered; foster care and out-of-home placement; homeless; immigrants, and juvenile justice)
- After-school activities
- Physical activity
- Diet and nutrition
- Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use
- Reproductive health of adolescents
- Confidential health services
- Childhood asthma (in-door and out-door risk factors; access to comprehensive care through universal health coverage)

Since its inception, Synergy partners have written proposals to public and private local, regional, state, and federal funding agencies and foundations and have been successful in bringing over five million dollars to the community. Our long-term objective is to improve the health and life skills of Vallejo’s youth and prepare them to become the next generation of engaged community members and leaders.”

*Jewel Fink,
Prevention Program
Vallejo, California*

“Our community coordinators had a set aside budget of approximately \$2000 per month to increase prevention activities. These activities were to be initiated by the community members themselves and focus on risk and protective factors unique to the communities. Community members submitted proposals to a community development team for discussion and approval and then were the key leaders to implement their ideas. The community members have flourished as their ideas have been honored and implemented.

Self esteem for community participation that addressed the critical factors for youth has grown and built strength to sustain all the efforts after the grant.”

*Patricia Mackey Stone,
Manager
Dallas, Nebraska*

“Our project was unique because two neighboring school districts combined efforts, shared resources, developed and offered similar programming. In total, both districts serve over 15,000 K-12

students. However, the Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse focused on students in grade 7-12.

Our comprehensive efforts included the following components:

- Implementing Project Northland curriculum in grades 7-9;
- Youth Development (Jr. High After School Program & High School Leadership);
- Parent Empowerment; and
- Community Involvement.”

*Judy Johnson,
Prevention Coordinator
Lakeville, Minnesota*

Making Underage Drinking a Community Agenda

“During the process of implementing the Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse in rural east Tennessee, many lessons have been learned. Unfortunately, the hardest lessons to learn are those with harsh realities. A small K-12 school learned this lesson all too well; a 12th grade student lost her life as a result of a drunk driving accident. The Project SUCCESS counselors spoke to students, faculty, and community members often on the topic of alcohol prevention, but following the death of this student people listened in a new way. This brought the prevention and education efforts of our program to a new level. The awareness of the negative consequences of alcohol impacted the students, faculty, parents, community, and surrounding communities. The potential of this student, daughter, and friend will never be realized; however, the dangers of alcohol have a spotlight cast upon them.

The Project SUCCESS counselors at Clinch-Powell Educational Cooperative intend to maintain the focus of underage drinking prevention on many levels:

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- Fatal Vision Presentations
- Mothers Against Drunk Driver’s Multimedia Presentations
- Project SUCCESS Prevention Education Series
- Project SUCCESS Group Counseling, Individual Counseling, Intervention and Education
- SADD and MADD Club Sponsorship
- Prom Promise
- Health Fairs
- Red Ribbon Week
- The Chain of Life

- Local Newspapers, School Newspapers, Newsletters, and Public Service Announcements
- Classroom Presentations, School Assemblies, Parent Night Presentations, Faculty/Staff Presentations, and other Community Outreach
- Driver’s Education Preparedness Classes”

*Marianne McCullough,
Project SUCCESS Counselor
Tazewell, Tennessee*

“Clinch-Powell Educational Cooperative has implemented Project SUCCESS in a four county area in East Tennessee. These counties include Claiborne, Grainger, Hancock and Union. This program emphasizes drug prevention education and counseling for high school students. One of our goals was to link all possible networks together to provide a safety net for students that were dealing with drug-related issues. In the county I represented, we were successful in doing this on the issue of underage drinking.

In the Grainger County School System, I saw a desire to take a stand against drunk driving issues. After many discussions with staff members and administrators, we decided to help motivate a student-led effort to make a difference on this issue. The local FCCLA Club within the school took up the challenge to make a difference. Our first priority was the upcoming Red Ribbon week activities. The students wanted to make a big splash with their first event of the school year. Activities included wear red day, class poster day, red ribbon day, celebrating drug free day, and a special assembly to present the issues to the student body. The assembly was quite an undertaking for the students involved. A skit was developed and performed by the FCCLA Club showing the fatal results of underage drinking.

Members of the Carson-Newman College football team also helped relay the message about destructive decisions and peer pressure. The response was overwhelming; students and staff were so happy with the week's activities. The presence of the local media at the event helped relay the message to the citizens of the county on how important this topic is in our society. This assembly began the planning stages for our first SADD club.

The Red Ribbon week assembly led many local law enforcement officials to take a part in the planning for the next assembly. Each prom season brings opportunities to make tough decisions. Many students think it is a ritual to take that first drink of alcohol during their school prom. Law enforcement and Project SUCCESS wanted to present the impact of drinking and driving. The Junior Class was the focal point of our planned event. Administrators pushed for this event to take place at both high schools before the prom season began. This issue was becoming a strong community agenda as the Grainger County Sheriff's Department, Rutledge City Police Department, Blaine City Police Department, the Tennessee Highway Patrol, SADD, Grainger County Schools, and Project SUCCESS all came together to make the assembly happen.

The program was called, "Fatal Vision: How Drinking and Driving Can Affect You." The Fatal Vision goggles were used to show the impact of being under the influence. Students drove a golf cart while impaired with the goggles. They were amazed that simple driving maneuvers could not be accomplished.

Also, they were taken through a sobriety test by the officers and were stunned that walking a straight line was impossible. The officers told stories about how underage drinking has destroyed families in the area.

The impact of the assembly still amazes me. How did all of these different agencies come together for one common cause? Planning and persistence

does pay off in the long run. A community can make a difference."

*Jeff Mullins,
Project SUCCESS Counselor
Tazewell, Tennessee*

"Presentations that focus on ensuring the safety of pre-prom or post-prom activities can only be done effectively if you have the student body, as well as the community, involved.

- The Project SUCCESS counselors at Clinch-Powell Educational Cooperative make it their responsibility to educate all prom-goers about the dangers of drinking and driving. They identify the risks and propose alternative options within classroom settings and assemblies. Students not only listen to information dispensed, but are allowed the opportunity to analyze this information by getting involved through means of role-playing wherein they can demonstrate responses they might have when exposed to drinking and driving situations. Counselors team up with local sheriffs and police officers to offer assemblies such as the one entitled "Fatal Vision," whereby students are allowed to wear goggles that replicate the negative effects alcohol has on coordination and vision impairment.
- Highway Traffic Safety Officers conduct mock field sobriety tests and educate the students as to the driving penalties in the state.
- Students rally together by wearing ribbons and signing pledge cards not to participate in alcohol or drug-related activities and community agencies band together to offer them incentives.
- Local newspapers run articles and parents are sent newsletters that get the parents involved by offering suggestions concerning what every parent should know about prom night and after.

- Counselors then follow up with sending out newsletters and announcements in local newspapers to make the public aware of ‘Safe Rides’ and the upcoming prom activities. ‘Safe Rides’ is a task force of volunteer students, parents, teachers, Principals, Directors of Schools, local Sheriffs and county officers that the counselors team together to offer their combined services for those students who find themselves having no safe ride home because the driver of their ride has consumed or otherwise indulged in alcohol or drugs.”

*Kathleen McNew,
Project SUCCESS Counselor
Tazewell, Tennessee*

“Solano County public and private social service providers and health practitioners, community and regional leaders, youth and family serving agencies, government agencies, local faith communities, and school district personnel have determined that underage drinking is a significant public health issue. Together, in April 2005 and continuing throughout 2006, we have launched a multi-pronged No Underage Drinking Campaign, applying social marketing strategies and tools directed toward parents and other adults. The campaign includes advertising, media relations, policy initiatives and community outreach with the objectives of:

- reaching parents and caregivers of pre-teens and teens with information about how they can keep alcohol away from their children;
- reaching local media with the message that they should support the education campaign and policy initiatives;
- reaching Solano County adults to establish a baseline level of public support for tougher fines for selling to underage minors and establishing alcohol use restrictions at one-day community events by measuring the public’s perceptions of the severity of the underage drinking issue; and

- gaining administrative and political support for county-wide and city ordinances to enact stronger regulations for establishing alcohol-use restrictions at one-day community events.

In Vallejo, the largest city in Solano County, this campaign is part of a much larger initiative, led by the Synergy Coalition - an active collaborative partnership of local leaders, health providers, youth and family serving agencies, local government, faith communities, and schools – whose purpose is to reduce the rates of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs among all of its citizens. In addition to the Department of Education’s Grant to Reduce Alcohol Abuse, funding sources include local, state and federal public and private agencies and foundations. No Underage Drinking Campaign materials can be downloaded at our website: <http://www.NODRUGS.INFO>.”

*Jewel Fink,
Prevention Program
Vallejo, California*

“Lane Education Service District’s (LESDD) Underage Drinking Prevention Project in collaboration with Lane County Coalition to Prevent Substance Abuse (LCCPSA) and the four major television networks-ABC, CBS, NBC and FOX, developed a televised Town Hall Forum in 2004. One Voice: Media United Against Drugs (MUAD) is a community-based process comprised of television and radio representatives and substance abuse prevention specialists. Lane County, Oregon, as far as we know, is the only place in the U.S. that has a collaborative of this type. That is, major networks working together to deliver media messages against substance abuse.

For the last four years, Media United Against Drugs has organized, produced, co-hosted and aired an hour long, commercial free, road-blocked television town hall to provide prescriptive information to thousands of Oregonians in five Oregon counties

to prevent, treat and diminish alcohol and drug use and its consequences. This past year, Media United's town hall garnered a 19-rating share, meaning that of all the households watching television between 6-7 p.m., 19% of them were viewing the television town hall. This is 2 percentage points up from the previous year's town hall forum. In addition, each town hall that offered a phone number for public contact averaged 50 telephone callers, most of whom were seeking information and referrals. Since 2001, the mediaunited.org website generated on average 500 hits to the site, with the majority of visitors seeking information and referral.

In 2004, Lane ESD Prevention Specialist, Mary Bork, helped develop the design of the hour-long program. In early fall 2003, Ms. Bork, met with the Brinda Narayan-Wold, Lane County Prevention Coordinator, station managers and the four network reporters to develop stories around substance use/abuse in the urban and rural Lane County area. The group decided to gather approximately 150 middle and high school students at one studio and ask the students a series of questions about youth substance use and how adults could help to prevent substance use. The moderated town hall event consisted of youth recruited from area schools for a group discussion of what parents and communities can do to prevent adolescent substance abuse. The final televised video included brief interviews, community case studies, and expert testimony interspersed with town hall youth discussion clips

Three themes emerged from the students' comments—enforcement, alternative activities and real consequences. Three segments were put together by the network reporters. PSAs were produced and included in the hour-long program as well as local, state and national youth substance abuse data.

Since 2000, Media United partners have written and produced a total of nine 30-second television prescriptive prevention PSAs promoting protective factors and assets, with the goal of reducing risk

factors associated with drug use and promoting the effectiveness of drug treatment. Over time, Media United has received scores of telephone callers seeking more information and referral.

From 2000—2002, MUAD partners have aired the PSAs for a combined total of 200 times per quarter on all of the local television stations.

From 2002—present day, MUAD television partners have aired the PSAs for a combined total of 450 times per quarter on all of the local television stations.

MUAD has created a pamphlet about drug prevention, treatment, and enforcement. Over 3,000 pamphlets have been distributed to the general public by the three participating television stations during the summers of 2001-2003.

RMC Research Corporation, Portland, Oregon, conducted a formal evaluation using a focus group. Results were very favorable.

By partnering with MUAD to help develop ideas for the forums and to provide some financial resources to make it all happen, our coalition has had great success. In fact, the 2004 Town Hall forum was nominated for a regional Emmy!

Information Dissemination: Communications can be used to influence community norms, increase public awareness about specific issues and problems related to substance abuse, attract community support for other program efforts, reinforce other program components, and keep the public informed about the program's progress. Communications strategies include media advocacy.

Incorporating Information Dissemination with Other CSAP Strategies: According to CSAP, the key to effective prevention is to use multiple strategies, in multiple settings, toward one common goal. In Lane County, Oregon, along with Media United's coordinated countywide information dissemination,

Prevention Link to Academic Success

“One of our proudest moments is when one of our students who was struggling with her grades and attitude became an honor student and cheerleader. She is now preparing to graduate and plans on attending college in the fall. Another former RY student is our Turtle Mountain Community High School Student Council President. Since implementation of the RY program we have 30 students who have graduated from High School with their scheduled class. These students may not have graduated had it not been for the Reduce Alcohol Grant, the RY Program, and the RY staff.”

*Farrell F. Gourneau,
Grant to Reduce Alcohol
Abuse
Belcourt, North Dakota*

One Grantee's Experiences with Multiple Model Programs

“Community Involvement and Coalitions

- Six months to one year planning processes using Principles of Effectiveness
- Critical to involve community leaders
- Difficult “dance” to include youth

All Stars Model Program

- Involve Host teachers (need to review and participate in process of implementation and selection of curriculum)
- Most host teachers prefer specialist (with their assistance)
- Curriculum adaptation
 - Teach lessons back to back instead of spread out
 - Deliver in 9–12 days (honor host teacher's needs)
 - Homework “graded”
 - Booster (difficult to do in high school (8th-9th grade) and struggle with booster lessons (HS curriculum)
- Favorite lessons for students
 - Art (determining goals and dreams)
 - Opinion Poll Survey Game
 - Good and Bad Worksheet and discussion
 - Any group or partner work
 - One on one time
- Parents (take home assignment to do with parents or guardians)
 - Most are supportive

- Appreciate that schools are talking about these issues
- Appreciate the opportunity built in to talk to their child about these issues
- Enjoy the Celebration

Youth Developed Social Norming Campaigns

- Have a clear vision, a plan, and a goal
- Establish key contact persons at each school site
- Do focus groups at each stage of development
- Create a timeline, be flexible and have a back-up plan
- Use the talent of your students
- Include administrators before moving forward
- COMMUNICATION is key in every step
- Reward the hard work of the students

Toward No Drug Abuse

- Have a committee of teachers do a curriculum review
- Get clear on costs of program and evaluation process
- Pilot test first?
- Dealing with well-established health teachers who feel their curriculum is better-what's their incentive to change?
- Specialist-difficult to sustain
- Works with teachers in a training but different response with students
- Complaints about curriculum materials
- Not current—nothing on brain research

Project Success

- Sent the wrong folks to training, found the training focused on system rather than what to do in groups/education series
- Found the Prevention Education Series curriculum was lacking and added additional information
- Had difficulty getting evaluations requested, still not in place
- The program did not meet the need for our intended target but was a useful systems tracking tool

Communities Mobilizing for a Change in Alcohol (Surveys)

- Better and more user-friendly surveys became available (through GRAAP meetings) creating a conflict for what tool to use for follow-up
- Interview versus surveys: Students get more benefits with interviews (relationship building) but more difficult to synthesize data and takes more time
- Pair students with adults—businesses are not always ‘friendly.’”

*Marian Gage,
Project Coordinator
Oroville, California*

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) Process

“Brevard’s grant, Project Alcohol Reduction (PAR) was funded in August 2004. The grant consisted of three project components: Project Success; Lions-Quest, Skills for Action: Teens—Alcohol and Other Drugs; and Students Against Destructive Decisions.

In November 2004, grant partners were notified that PAR required IRB review. The project evaluators, Rain & Brehm Consulting Group, Inc., took the lead to acquire an IRB. We began the process immediately upon notification; however we soon learned that obtaining IRB approval was neither a short nor inexpensive process.

We began our search by contacting companies listed as approved IRBs. This list, provided by the Department of Education, consisted of commercial IRBs meeting requirements and standards set by the Department of Health and Human Services. During the months of December ‘04 and early January ‘05, the evaluators emailed and/or telephoned all of the approved commercial IRBs on the list. Only four indicated they performed social-behavioral reviews (the rest worked exclusively in biomedical/pharmaceutical). Of those four, none could provide us with an absolute cost for the review.

Chesapeake Research Review, Inc. (CRRI) had experience with Department of Education, Office of Safe & Drug-Free Schools grant programs. They alone were able to suggest that our submission should consist of two separate submissions (other IRBs suggested we submit the entire package as a single submission; then wait to find out if the project required multiple component submissions). They also were able to provide us with a range of costs, e.g., from a low of \$4,700 to a high of \$13,000 per grant component. Again, however, they could not give us a fixed or absolute cost for each review, until after we had applied.

The SADD component did not require IRB review. However, both Project Success and Lions-Quest components did. These grant components delivered two completely different interventions, to two completely different populations. For this reason primarily, two separate submissions were required. The cost for each submission was \$4,700.

The project evaluators compiled each submission. It is important to note that even with the vast, previous experience the evaluators had as principal investigators, the submission documents from CRRI were difficult to understand. We have since learned that even though commercial IRBs provide reviews of social-behavioral research projects, application forms and consent and assent documents generally are written by medical writers. Many of the items in the application forms did not apply to us. Had we not had significant technical assistance from CRRI, we would never have thoroughly understood that, and our submission would have been significantly delayed.

Prior to drafting the first submission for Project Success (a component which should have started in January 2005), we had several conference calls with CRRI before sending our first submission on January 27, 2005. The Project Success IRB application/submission consisted of 900 pages and required copies of the grant, evaluation tools, and program materials including full copies of curriculum. Project Success was reviewed on February 18, 2005 and conditionally approved. Conditional approval was based on the evaluators obtaining a Certificate of Confidentiality from a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Center. It was also conditioned upon finalizing consent and assent documents. It is important to note, that even though the IRB required us to obtain the Certificate, they could not guide us to an agency. They did suggest

we check the NIH website for guidance. Common sense led us to the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). We applied for the Certificate of Confidentiality on March 5, 2005.

Simultaneously, we submitted the Lions-Quest IRB application. That submission consisted of 500 pages and copies of relevant documents. We received approval on March 14, 2005, conditioned upon finalizing consent and assent documents.

In late March, we trained consenting personnel on the consent and assent documents sent to us by CRRRI. Recall: CRRRI writers were medical writers, and the language contained in their documents used medical versus prevention terminology. The CRRRI documents were therefore cumbersome and intimidating—e.g., parent reading levels exceeded those recommended by the U.S. Department of Education; similarly, youth assents were above the reading grade level of most students in the project. As well, the documents read like legal documents, required multiple parent/student signatures including initialing of each page by both parties, and required multiple signatures by consenting personnel. The length of the documents posed a time issue. Guidance Counselors reported that it required approximately 2 hours to enroll students at abeyance sites; to also consent parents and students at the same time would significantly lengthen enrollment time. We believed these documents would potentially reduce participation in the research/evaluation portion of the grant.

Therefore, the evaluators drafted revisions of the consent and assent documents, which:

- Reduced the reading level of the parent consent from 12th to 8th-9th grade reading level;
- Reduced the reading level of the youth assent from 10th -12th grade reading level to 6.5 grade;
- Defined words (e.g., aggregate means “by group”);

- Double-columned the forms and increased line spacing and font-size;
- Eliminated the need for parents and students to initial each page of the document: we effected this by putting consents/assents in booklet form; and
- Softened the language requiring consenting personnel to sign the consent document.

These versions were accepted by CRRRI, and will be adopted by CRRRI for use with other Department of Education programs that they review.

Once consent/assent issues were completed for Project Success, we redrafted consents for Lions-Quest, using the same format as the one used with Project Success. Then, we awaited issuance of the Certificate of Confidentiality from NIAAA. Subsequently, NIAAA amended the consents and assents to meet NIH legal interpretations of consent/assent wording, which further delayed the project.

During this time period (May 2005) we also learned that the evaluators’ FWA number could not be used in place of an FWA for the School Board and prevention provider. Both received FWA numbers during the second week of May. The Certificate of Confidentiality was issued on May 18 by NIAAA, and the project released for data collection. At this writing, final approval for Lions-Quest has been obtained, and consent/assent documents finalized. However, we are still awaiting issuance of the Certificate of Confidentiality by NIAAA. To date, 500 man hours have been dedicated to the IRB process for PAR.

It is important to note: After final approval is given by the IRB, any change in grant methods, documents, and consent/assent documents incur additional charges. It is important to also note that, in school-based projects, we build upon lessons learned; overtime, various methods, approaches and/or forms/documents must change as the program evolves and matures. At this point in time, we

hesitate to consider making any changes that might improve the project with respect to methodology, including those that might be indicated as part of our project experience/process evaluation, because of the costs associated with making such changes. We have also learned that in each year of our grant, we must pay an additional \$4,700 per grant component to CRRRI, as part of the annual review.

Based on these experiences we have learned several lessons:

1. In the future, as soon as we receive notification of grant award from our Congressional representative, we will begin the IRB submission process, to avoid delays. We anticipate future submissions will require a minimum of six to eight months to effect approval.
2. At the time of grant application we will factor in a minimum of \$5,000 per grant component per year for IRB annual review;
3. At the time of grant application, we will allocate a budget line item to support the internal management of the IRB as a part-time FTE (approximately 500 hours per year to oversee the initial submission, continuing review, annual review, and training and monitoring of consent personnel and IRB protocols).
4. Prevention is a unique field with its own language. Grantees working with IRBs for the first time must be prepared to educate initial IRB staff reviewers to the nuances of the field, especially with regard to terminology (e.g., universal, indicated, selective programs; risk and protective factors; etc.).
5. School-based programs must also educate initial IRB staff reviewers to the organization of schools. We advocated very hard for approval to mass-consent the parents and guardians of nearly 20,000 students, using consents disseminated by/returned to classroom teachers. We discussed this method of informed consent

with the IRB panel, during the review process (via teleconference). Reviewers suggested we use computerized consents, so that parents could just “fill them out on-line and send them back.” This, above all comments, helped us understand that the reviewers did not understand our population—not all families have access to computers, or the knowledge to use them. We finally received approval to mass-consent families via the classroom teacher.

6. Above all, we learned “no question is a bad question” and “it doesn’t hurt to ask.” Anything we felt was unrealistic, we put before the IRB. This was accomplished in writing and in the form of justification letters or e-mails. In all instances, the IRB was persuaded to our point of view.”

*Catherine Rain,
Program Evaluator
For: School Board of Brevard
County
Rockledge, Florida*

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